



OFFICIAL STATEMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

Presented by Mr. Davit TONOVAN, Minister of Emergency Situations

Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction,

24-26 May 2017, Cancun

I would like to thank for this opportunity to make a statement on behalf of the Government of Armenia and congratulate the UNISDR and Mexico for hosting this great event. The Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction provides an excellent forum to evaluate progress of Sendai framework along with remarkable achievements and future developments, and to share best practices for establishing new partnership and cooperation arrangements.

Armenia committed itself to Sendai framework in 2015, and since then has embarked in implementation of the Sendai priorities for action, thus embracing risk-informed approach for development and resilience. The new National Strategy on Disaster Risk Management approved recently by the Armenian Government anchored this approach in line with SDGs and priorities of Sendai.

Both the Strategy and its formulation process are so far exceptional in the region- initiated by the Ministry of Emergency Situations of Armenia and supported by the Japan - World Bank DRM Program and UNDP. An innovative methodology for DRM capacity assessment based on Sendai principles supported this process ensuring meaningful participation of the key local, interagency and international stakeholders within the framework of National DRR Platform.

Advancement of scientific works on disaster risk and climate change, synergies of public, private and academic spheres resulted in multi-risk profiling models for community development. Current modernization of seismic hazard map of Armenia, comprehensive modeling of risk at community level, strengthening of urban resilience are some examples of our efforts.

Modernization of the early warning system and improvement of access to DRR information and knowledge are the cornerstones of public awareness aimed at enhancement of culture of resilience. In this context, Armenia adopted a targeted DRR plan for public schools, focusing on increasing resilience of educational infrastructures, and improving DRM educational programs.

Contemporary challenges necessitate adoption of new approaches in DRR financing. With special attention to self-sustaining principle on a community level, we continuously strengthen financial capacities of Armenian DRM system by proactively engaging private partners and by increasing efficiency of operations introducing innovations and adopting best policies and practices available globally.

In the scope of national disaster preparedness and response capacity development, Armenia was the 1st country in the South Caucasus to join INSARAG in 2015, now qualified for respective



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international engagement, thanks to support from UN OCHA, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, UNDP and Rescue Service of Poland.

Current plans for disaster preparedness and population protection assume targeted measures to address problems of sexual and reproductive health, increase capacity of relevant structures for disaster medicine to protect life and wellbeing of all citizens.

Steady progress in enhancement of the culture of resilience requires continuous institutional development. In this regard, among the key pillars, the active role and efforts of National DRR Platform, including the growing partnership and effective intergovernmental cooperation is of crucial importance.

National DRM capacity building has been tremendously contributed by international and local organizations including UNISDR, UNDP, OCHA, UNICEF, World Bank, JICA, EU Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, SDC, ARCS and many others, as well as by partner countries, including China, Germany, Japan, Russia, Switzerland, the United States, etc. The role of all our partners can never be underestimated, and we want to express our sincere gratitude for continuous support and excellent cooperation.

Our aspiration is to make Armenia, which is a small geographically landlocked state facing almost all types of disaster risk challenges, a model of a resilient country. To this end we aim to put the human development at the heart of our Sendai-oriented efforts, attaching importance to the fact that sustainable development of a country depends on making Sendai a success.

DRM often outgrows its traditional borders and supports other humanitarian and development aspects essential for local communities. In Armenian context it interlinks with humanitarian demining which is an important basis for sustainable development of communities and socio-economic integration of population.

Concluding my remarks, I would like to emphasize that disasters do not recognize political military realities between countries. I hope that this international conference will prove to be a crucial milestone and a catalyst for incorporating Sendai priorities into the implementation of SDG, and bringing international and cross-border cooperation to a new level of quality for making our world resilient.

Thank you.